



Forum on Transportation Investment

April 2005

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A turning point for Idaho transportation

The Idaho Legislature approved a plan this month that I believe history will record as a major turning point in the state's transportation system. Resounding support of Gov. Dirk Kempthorne's visionary Connecting Idaho initiative will provide the tools to transform our transportation system, enabling us to bring to life projects that have been on the drawing boards a long time.

GARVEE (Grant Anticipation Revenue Vehicle) bonding will enable us to put future federal funds to work today, to complete nearly three decades of projects in the next 10 years. We will do that without adding ITD staff, risking the state's credit or jeopardizing ongoing transportation programs.

I believe the Legislature read and responded to the pulse of more than 90 percent of the population of this state when it approved the governor's plan. They're saying that careful risk-taking and use of the tools as they have been presented are the wave of the future.

I can tell you that as I walked the halls of the Capitol the past three months, legislators to a person, said it's not about the transportation industry; it's not about the department of transportation; it's not about city and county professionals. It's about the change in a culture. It's about innovative financing.

We have an ambitious future immediately in front of us, one filled with challenges and opportunities. I will keep you informed as details come into clearer focus.

The next decade will be one of the most exciting periods in Idaho transportation history. We have the knowledge, the experience and people to transform our transportation system. Legislative approval of Gov. Kempthorne's Connecting Idaho now gives us some much-needed tools to help make it happen.

Forum on Transportation Investment April meeting

The third meeting of the Forum on Transportation Investment will focus on transportation needs – current and future. The meeting will be:

Thursday, April 28, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
at the Red Lion Hotel at 1555
Pocatello Creek Road in Pocatello.

Anyone interested in attending a meeting to follow the discussion and observe the Forum should contact ITD's Budget, Policy, and Intergovernmental Relations Manager, Julie Pipal (208-334-8804 or julie.pipal@itd.idaho.gov) for further details.

Legislature paves way for future with passage of Connecting Idaho

Idaho legislators this month authorized the use of a new tool that will expedite highway construction projects, generate jobs, stimulate the economy and transform the state's transportation system.

Representatives worked late in the 2005 session to reach a compromise on Gov. Dirk Kempthorne's revolutionary Connecting Idaho bill that easily passed the Senate a week earlier. After making several minor amendments to the bill, the House voted 47-23 to send the proposal back to the Senate where consensus was quickly reached by a 30-3 vote.

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Forum turns focus to state's future transportation needs

The third meeting of the Forum on Transportation Investment will focus on Idaho's transportation needs. At this meeting, the Forum will examine data and transportation planning efforts.

The January meeting focused on current financial tools available to transportation agencies in Idaho. The fourth meeting, coming in June, will discuss future finance options.

The April meeting of the Forum on Transportation Investment will look at how much money Idaho will need over the next 30 years to meet the transportation needs of its growing economy and communities.

The Pocatello meeting will be from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Thursday, April 28 at the Red Lion Hotel, 1555 Pocatello Creek Road.

"Idaho is certainly facing a growing transportation need, and the citizens of Idaho have a right to expect an orderly and ongoing commitment to their surface transportation system," said Dwight Bower, vice president at H.W. Lochner, consultant to the Forum.

Participants will assess the validity of the planned improvements to achieve an understanding of the difference between wants and needs.

The morning session of the Forum will feature a GARVEE bonding bill update from ITD Director David Ekern, a needs prospective from Tom Warne of Tom Warne & Associates, a panel discussion on transportation needs and the introduction of the 30-year capital improvement report by Bower.

Panel members and their topics will include:

- Scott Ellsworth of CH2M Hill – Idaho Highway Users
- Joe Haynes, Local Highway Technical Assistance Council – Local
- Mary Barker, Community Transportation Association of Idaho – Public Transit
- Matt Stoll, Community Planning Association of Southwest Idaho – Regional Needs Prospective

After the lunch address by featured speaker Rick Krochalis, Regional Administrator of the Federal Transit Administration, Forum participants will move to facilitated breakout sessions.

Forum chair Jim Kempton will conclude the session with a summary of the day's work and an introduction to the next meeting.

Krochalis discusses public transportation



Much of the discussion during the Forum on Transportation Investment will focus on moving commercial and personal vehicles along Idaho's system of roads. But as the state and its communities continue to grow, so does the demand for public transportation.

The guest speaker at the Forum on Transportation Investment lunch will be Rick Krochalis, Regional Administrator of the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). The topic will be "Vision of Public Transit."

"The surveys conducted as part of the new Forum on Transportation Investment revealed the public's understanding of the limited availability of public transportation," Krochalis said. "What choices do we want to examine for future needs around the state? How can rural communities and cities work with the Federal Transit Administration and ITD on funding options?"

Krochalis has been head of the FTA Region 10 office that serves Idaho, Washington, Oregon and Alaska since May 2002. He is responsible for the administration of FTA's capital, operating and planning programs in the region. He also provides technical assistance to grantees and state, local and private sector officials on a wide range of matters affecting urban and rural transportation.

January meeting review

The January meeting at the Boise Holiday Inn focused on current financial tools. Panel speakers were:

- Steve Moreno, FHWA Division Administrator – Idaho's funding source from the federal government,
- Pam Lowe, Idaho Transportation Department – state transportation funding, and
- Byron Keely, Local Highway Technical Assistance Council – transportation funding for local highway entities.

The guest luncheon speaker was Bill Hayden from the Arizona Department of Transportation. He spoke about the financing of Arizona's highway projects.



Legislature paves way...continued from page 1

With the last piece of the 2005 Legislative puzzle placed, lawmakers cleared their desks, packed their bags and headed home. History will record the 2005 Idaho Legislative session one of the most productive and influential.

With the bill signed into law by Gov. Kempthorne, the Idaho Transportation Board will be authorized to use bonds to compress nearly 30 years of normal highway construction into about 10 years.

Approval of GARVEE (Grant Anticipation Revenue Vehicle) bonding will fuel the governor's Connecting Idaho plan and change the face of Idaho's transportation system.

With the bill signed into law by Gov. Kempthorne, the Idaho Transportation Board will be authorized to use bonds to compress nearly 30 years of normal highway construction into about 10 years.

A portion of Idaho's future federal highway funds will be used to repay the bonds. The financing strategy also enables the transportation board flexibility in choosing whether to complete all or a portion of the 13 projects identified in Gov. Kempthorne's initiative.

Idaho will join a growing number of states that use the GARVEE bonding concept to move projects from the conceptual stage to construction. The transportation board will prioritize projects identified in Kempthorne's plan and determine which ones qualify for GARVEE bonding.

Next Forum on Transportation Investment meeting

The Forum on Transportation Investment panel will meet several more times throughout the state before delivering its final report at the Nov. 29 meeting in Boise. The fourth meeting is scheduled for June 28 in Twin Falls. The topic for that meeting is "Future Finance Options."

Anyone interested in attending a meeting to follow the discussion and observe the panel should contact ITD's Budget, Policy, and Intergovernmental Relations Manager, Julie Pipal (208-334-8804 or julie.pipal@itd.idaho.gov) for further details.

The purpose of the series is to examine highway, rail and transit issues in Idaho. The group will:

- examine, document and assess Idaho's transportation goals through 2030 including those already documented by state and local government;
- investigate current and potential future transportation finance tools and assess their viability for Idaho;
- recommend actions and policies that will assist Idaho in achieving its future transportation vision; and
- compile a final report for the Idaho Transportation Board in November.

Forum on Transportation Investment tentative 2005 schedule

Meeting #3 <i>Transportation needs – current and future</i>	April 28	Pocatello
Meeting #4 <i>Future finance options</i>	June 28	Twin Falls
Meeting #5 <i>Idaho's long-range transportation plan</i>	TBA	Coeur d'Alene
Meeting #6 <i>Draft recommendations</i>	Nov. 1	Boise
Meeting #7 <i>Final recommendations</i>	Nov. 29	Boise

Agenda for the third meeting of the Forum on Transportation Investment

April 28, 2005 – 9:00 am to 4:00 pm

Red Lion Hotel, 1555 Pocatello Creek Road, Pocatello

- 9:00 Welcome and Introductions – *Jim Kempton, Chair*
- 9:20 GARVEE Update – *Idaho Transportation Board Chairman Chuck Winder & ITD Director David Ekern*
- 9:40 Needs Prospective – *Tom Warne, Tom Warne & Associates, LLC*
- 10:05 Break
- 10:25 Transportation Needs – Current & Future Panel Discussion (*Tom Warne, Moderator, 15 min. presentations*)
 - Idaho Highway Users – *Scott Ellsworth, CH2M Hill*
 - Local – *Joe Haynes, Local Highway Technical Assistance Council*
 - Public Transit – *Mary Barker, Community Transportation Association of Idaho*
 - Regional Needs Prospective—*Matt Stoll, COMPASS*
- 11:30 30-Year Capital Improvement Report – *Dwight Bower, H.W. Lochner*
- 12:00 Wrap Up Needs Prospective (*Tom Warne*)
- 12:15 Lunch – *Rick Krochalis, Regional Administrator of the Federal Transit Administration – “Vision of Public Transit”*
- 1:15 Facilitated Breakout sessions
- 3:00 Break
- 3:15 Summary Session
- 3:45 Next Meeting
- 4:00 Adjourn